

Seattle City Council
Finance and Culture Committee Meeting
2 p.m. Friday, March 6, 2015

Words' Worth
The Poetry Program of the Seattle City Council

Curated by **Sierra Nelson**

Today's poet is **Ed Skoog**

Ed Skoog is the author of two collections of poetry, *Rough Day* and *Mister Skylight*, both published by Copper Canyon Press. *Rough Day* won the 2014 Washington State Book Award in Poetry. He has been a writer-in-residence at the Richard Hugo House, George Washington University, and the University of Montana; he currently teaches at Everett Community College.

Rail Station Under Construction

By Ed Skoog

The rain got smaller when the grocery store was levelled.
Green walls angled a new gray on sidewalk work
spilling through gaps of future entrances.
The crane will turn most of the morning.
Its skyborne operator looks out to sea
and into the neighborhoods, himself
the greatest owl in the last tremendous tree.
Paths from the high school to open lunch
change each day through the construction zone.
For them, the work has gone on forever
and they'll be gone before the first train arrives.
I was out here last night, unable to sleep
and the mischief of students could have gone far then
with bulldozers and etc left to the wind
Maybe they could have zapped one started with sheer youth,

torn down the school before anyone heard.
Possums stumble around drunk. Only the boring
machine knows what's really happening down there,
inches a day below the house. It is like weather,
or a messiah, or the guy you gave twenty bucks to
for pot and has never returned. We guess the tunnel
the way a colder city has everyone guess
the hour the river will break into triangles of futurism.
On the horizon the mountain makes me say
I'm inclined to be alone. Mid-afternoons
at the running track level with the walls,
I'm able to look down into the hole
while surveyors and piledrivers slow down
watching the tower crane bring around its boom
and measures its hook into the pit.
It's a time for steady work, as morning's
apprentice enthusiasm, or the hustle
to cut out early. And when the rain
returns it washes down the side of the pit
like rippling scales. Once a worker
found a rough-skinned newt in the lime,
red-bellied and patiently fierce, ancient
perhaps ancestor shaken from its stasis.
The tunnel is coming. School years whip.
A new restaurant opens in anticipation.
The owner's daughter throws a stack of delivery menus
over the fence and they snow their way down.

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